

Naoman sat down on the floor with his back against the logs which formed the wall. The children played with the beads which hung in a long string around his neck.

"Are you hungry?" asked the good housewife. Many times she had fed the chief when game was scarce and his own people starving. In a thousand ways she had been kind to him, and he had shown appreciation in many ways.

"Naoman not hungry," he muttered, finally. "Naoman will tell you something. First you promise that you will tell no one, not even your husband. It is a secret of the tribe, and no Waorneck has ever betrayed his people before.

The woman, all attention, came near to him and promised to keep the secret as she would her life.

"To-morrow at sunset the Indians will come to kill you all," was the startling information which fell from his lips. "They will burn down the house, kill the children before your eyes, torture your husband and carry you away with them. Naoman has spoken, and nothing but the truth. Go down the river."

Then he arose, pushed the children aside gently and strode across the clearing. The woods hid him in a moment, and the woman was alone with her children and her fears. Without telling her husband, she persuaded him to start down the river the next afternoon. She told him that she was frightened. They were actually in their canoe when the Indians swooped down upon them. Naoman was in the crowd which surrounded the poor wretches, but he knew them not. The Indians demanded to know why they were leaving their clearing in such a hurry. They insisted roughly on knowing the name of the one who had betrayed their plans. The husband did not know, and the wife would not tell. They bound her to a tree and tortured her for a time, and when she recovered from a fainting spell they offered to set her free and to spare the children if she would tell them.